

March 2013



Siskiyou County FSA Updates

DEAR PRODUCERS: Welcome to the new GovDelivery bulletins and updates service from your Siskiyou County FSA office. Note that you are welcome to request to receive bulletins from more than one state and/or county and can add or remove individual subscriptions at any time.

Siskiyou County FSA Office

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DCP/ACRE Sign-up Continues

DCP and ACRE signups for the 2013 crops are on-going. The DCP sign-up period will end on Aug. 2, 2013; and the ACRE sign-up period will end on June 3, 2013.

The 2013 DCP and ACRE program provisions are unchanged from 2012, except that all eligible participants in 2013 may choose to enroll in either DCP or ACRE for the 2013 crop year. This means that eligible producers who were enrolled in ACRE in 2012 may elect to enroll in DCP in 2013 or may re-enroll in ACRE in 2013. Likewise producers who were enrolled in DCP may opt for ACRE enrollment.

[Read more about DCP and ACRE](#) or contact the FSA county office for more information, or an appointment to enroll.

45th CRP General Sign-Up

USDA will conduct a four-week general sign-up for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), beginning May 20 and ending on June 14. CRP protects the nation's natural resources through voluntary participation, while providing significant economic and environmental benefits to rural communities across the United States.

Currently, about 27 million acres are enrolled in CRP. Producers that are accepted in the sign-up can receive cost-share assistance to plant long-term, resource-conserving covers and receive an annual rental payment for the length of the contract (10-15 years).

Contracts on 3.3 million acres of CRP are set to expire on Sept. 30, 2013. Producers with expiring contracts or producers with environmentally sensitive land are encouraged to evaluate their options under CRP.

For more information on CRP and other FSA programs, visit a local FSA

service center or www.fsa.usda.gov.

Microloan Program

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) developed the Microloan (ML) program to better serve the unique financial operating needs of beginning, niche and small family farm operations.

FSA offers applicants a Microloan designed to help farmers with credit needs of \$35,000 or less. The loan features a streamlined application process built to fit the needs of new and smaller producers. This loan program will also be useful to specialty crop producers and operators of community supported agriculture (CSA).

Eligible applicants can apply for a maximum amount of \$35,000 to pay for initial start-up expenses such as hoop houses to extend the growing season, essential tools, irrigation and annual expenses such as seed, fertilizer, utilities, land rents, marketing, and distribution expenses. As financing needs increase, applicants can apply for a regular operating loan up to the maximum amount of \$300,000 or obtain financing from a commercial lender under FSA's Guaranteed Loan Program.

Individuals interested in applying for a microloan or who would like to discuss other farm loan programs available, should contact the local FSA office to setup an appointment with a loan approval official.

HWFRCP Claims Deadline March 25

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack reminds Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers who allege discrimination by the USDA in past decades that the filing period will close March 25, 2013. USDA urges potential claimants to contact the Claims Administrator for information and mail their claim packages on or before the deadline.

The process offers a voluntary alternative to litigation for each Hispanic or female farmer and rancher who can prove that USDA denied his or her application for loan or loan servicing assistance for discriminatory reasons for certain time periods between 1981 and 2000. As announced in February 2011, the voluntary claims process will make available at least \$1.33 billion for cash awards and tax relief payments, plus up to \$160 million in farm debt relief, to eligible Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers. There are no filing fees to participate in the program.

Claimants may register for a claims package by calling the telephone number below Monday through Friday 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Eastern Time or by downloading the forms from the website.

Website: www.farmerclaims.gov

Phone: 1-888-508-4429

Claims Period: September 24, 2012 - March 25, 2013.

An independent adjudicator will administer the claims process and adjudicate the claims. Although there are no filing fees to participate and a lawyer is not required to participate in the claims process, persons seeking legal advice may contact a lawyer or other legal services provider. Legal resources ready to assist nationwide can be found at www.nationalaglawcenter.org

GovDelivery

The USDA Farm Service Agency offices are now communicating electronically to save time and taxpayer dollars. Producers can now enroll in the new GovDelivery email system that provides notices, newsletters and electronic reminders instead of a hard copy through the postal mail.

FSA, like many organizations is working smarter and more efficiently. County Committee ballots and all program or loan-related documents will continue to be mailed to all eligible producers.

Producers can subscribe to receive free e-mail updates by going to <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/subscribe>

IRS 1099-G Changes

Calendar year 2012 brought changes to the way FSA reports farm program payments to the producer and to the IRS. In past years, IRS Forms 1099-G would be issued to show all program payments received from the Farm Service Agency, regardless of the amount.

For calendar year 2012, producers whose total reportable payments from FSA were less than \$600 will not receive IRS Form 1099-G. Also, producers who received payments from more than one county will only receive one Form 1099-G if the total of all payments from all counties was \$600 or more. The same changes will apply to those who normally receive IRS Form 1099-MISC from FSA

Farm Storage Facility Loans

The Farm Storage Facility Loan Program (FSFLP) allows producers of eligible commodities to obtain low-interest financing to build or upgrade farm storage and handling facilities.

The new maximum principal amount of a loan through FSFL is \$500,000. Participants are now required to provide a down payment of 15 percent, with Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) loaning the remaining 85 percent of the net cost of the eligible storage facility and permanent drying and handling equipment. New loan terms of 7, 10 or 12 years are available depending on the amount of the loan. Interest rates for each term rate may be different and are based on the rate which CCC borrows from the U.S. Treasury Department.

The initial partial disbursement will be available after a portion of the construction has been completed. The final fund disbursement will be made when all construction is completed. The maximum amount of the partial disbursement will be 50 percent of the projected and approved total loan amount.

Applications for FSFL must be submitted to the FSA county office that maintains the farm's records. An FSFL must be approved before any site preparation or construction can begin. For more information about FSFL please visit your FSA county office or www.fsa.usda.gov.

Beginning and Limited Resource Farmers

FSA assists beginning farmers and or members of socially disadvantaged groups to finance agricultural enterprises. Under these designated farm loan programs, FSA can provide financing to eligible applicants through either direct or guaranteed loans. FSA defines a beginning farmer as a person who:

- § Has operated a farm for not more than 10 years
- § Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm
- § Agrees to participate in a loan assessment, borrower training and financial management program

sponsored by FSA

§ Does not own a farm in excess of 30 percent of the county's median size.

Additional program information, loan applications and other materials are available at your local USDA Service Center. Visit www.fsa.usda.gov

Loans for the Socially Disadvantaged

FSA has a number of loan programs available to assist applicants to begin or continue in agriculture production. Loans are available for operational needs or help purchase or improve farm or ranch property. While all qualified producers are eligible to apply for these loan programs, the FSA has provided priority funding for socially disadvantaged applicants.

A socially disadvantaged applicant is a member of a group that has been subjected to racial, ethnic or gender prejudice. FSA loans are only available to applicants who meet all the eligibility requirements and are unable to obtain the needed credit elsewhere.

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USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Stop 9410, Washington, DC 20250-9450, or call toll-free at (866) 632-9992 (English) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD) or (866) 377-8642 (English Federal-relay) or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish Federal-relay).